

LUCHA LIBRE WEEKLY

TUESDAY, APRIL 28, 1992

\$1.00 PER ISSUE-1427 WEST DICKENS AVENUE-CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60614

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 10

Before I get started on the issue, I'd like to take care of some housekeeping details. First and foremost, I want to thank Dave Meltzer for his help, both with the last issue (lead story) and with his plug overall. In the most recent ARENA REPORT, columnist Klon wrote some very nice words both about me and about this newsletter. Unfortunately, one line is not true. I take it that Klon is not the only person who "assumes" this, so I need to correct it immediately. Klon wrote, and I quote, "It is my understanding that when Dave Melzter has a question on this type of wrestling, he goes to Steve Sims." Sorry, but I can't recall a single time Dave has come to me for questions. I have written a letter to ARENA REPORT addressing just this point.

I know there are a ton of sheets out there, over 50 and maybe over 100, and virtually all of them use Dave's WRESTLING OBSERVER NEWSLETTER as the source for some if not all of their news and background. (By using the word "some" in that sentence I have qualified my previous statement enough.) The writing I do is strictly about the Mexican-lucha-libre style of wrestling. I do my own research and try to compile all of the information in the newsletter on my own. However, this is COMPILED information. What comes out in this newsletter is information gathered from reading daily Mexico City newspapers such as ESTO, OVACIONES, and LA PRENSA, weekly magazines such as SUPER LUCHAS and BOX Y LUCHA, watching Galavision and Imevision TV shows, and reading other sources such as PELIGRO and CUSTODIA magazines in Mexico and WEEKLY GONG and WEEKLY PRO WRESTLING from Tokyo. Very little of the information is gathered, in a journalistically proper sense, from first-hand reporting. Does that mean I am stealing my information or cheating somehow? I don't think so. Maybe if I made a profit there could be a basis for that discussion, but as it is, I am merely the prism, gathering all the available light in the form of lucha libre information that I can each week and reflecting it to the 60 or so of you who are interested in this sort of thing.

Now, the point of the last paragraph. Without the help of Dave (who has sources in Mexico City and elsewhere), people like Flaco from WEEKLY PRO and Wally Yamaguchi and Tsutomu Shimizu from WEEKLY GONG, and all the Mexican scribes, I would not have an issue to put out. Therefore, what I know and what I have learned is a compilation of many other people's work, which I in turn devote a considerable amount of "editing work" on. I have amassed in the last three years, obviously, quite a lot of information and facts about lucha libre. Whether I have any great knowledge about the sport is debatable, but I do know some facts and can make both logical assumptions and draw logical conclusions. My predictions and assumptions are not always right, but there is always a sound basis for them when I do make them. It's hard to say that I know what can or should be done in or for a promotion, except in the most obvious cases such as the consistently repeated mistakes the UWA makes. But the facts I report are accurate and the assumptions and predictions, if not always perfect, are at least better than educated guesses.

To summarize, I wanted to explain that I am not the be-all of lucha libre experts; Dave doesn't come to me at all; and the previous words explain where I DO get my stuff and how I compile it. I go to Dave for information sometime, but he has yet to come to me. I imagine that Dave gets bugged when other people literally and subtly steal from the work he has done to make their own money on sheets. I have some idea that some people do try to call him for the latest information for their sheets before they mail. I don't want to do that. Whether anyone else does and whether that is "kosher" or not is between Dave and that editor. But I want this to be MY sheet as much as possible, without relying on Dave too much. I will take some of the news he reports in his newsletter and use that as publicly published information (for example, that Black Terry and Jose Luis Feliciano are now in los Guerreros Mayas) but I feel it is wrong for me to get information from Dave, publish it, and then beat him out on the street with that information, even if I credit him. I did it last week with the results of el Satanico versus el Ultimo Dragon, but even while I was doing it, I felt uncomfortable about it. I withheld some other information he gave me (stuff I have since researched through the Japanese weekly magazines and is entirely about luchadores en Japon) out of this unease.

Well, I have gotten that off my chest, and even edited down, it has taken most of my lead analysis story away. I feel so strongly about this, however, that I wanted to cover it first. I would appreciate each of you who reads this letting me know how you feel about this. I already know many of you (actually most of you) I ran this by first strongly advised me not to take up the space in the sheet going over this, but my heart got in the way of my head, if you will. The lead story was to have been a little analysis of how the CMLL puts over the rudos, or heel, wrestlers so often in big stipulation matches. From 12/13/91 (the end of their year) to 4/26/92, the CMLL has 28 big stip. matches with the rudo winning 14, the tecnico 13, and 1 draw. Interestingly, 24 of the 28 have been clean finishes. That's up next time.

CMLL TELEVISION RUNDOWN: This has been a good year so far for fans of the CMLL on Galavision. The CMLL runs series at its two major arenas. Usually they run four series a year, each lasting about seven weeks, at the 17,500 seat la Arena Mexico, and every other Friday night in between they run at the 5,500 seat la Arena Coliseo. Since their "1991 year" ended on Sunday, December 15, 1991, ending a very disappointing 1991 in the ring, the federation has upgraded its television product both in the ring and on television. The show that just aired this past Sunday night, April 26, 1992, from la Arena Coliseo, was taped Friday, April 17, 1992. On paper it looked like a "biding-their-time" card, one of the least important of the year. It turned out to be a good (not great) show, one that would have been one of the better shows in 1991, and went to illustrate how much things have improved in the CMLL in 1992.

The incial of the card was the television opener. For the second straight week, All Japan Women's Professional Wrestling stars Akira (Akira Hokuto) and Mita (Etsuko Mita) defeated the native Mexican team of Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales and Xochitl Hamada in three falls. By the way, the "Dinamita" nickname for Lola is to re-energize her character, but she looked ~~very~~ old in the face, and got more tired and blown up than I can ever remember for her. The Japanese were in as rudas, which is a first for the CMLL to bring in Japanese as heels. It was a shame, too, as these two are two of the best technical lady wrestlers ever and it was a waste of their skills. I am sure, though, that they will learn some new stuff and take in back to Japan and use it, which is the reason they are over here. I guess the idea for the CMLL World Ladies' Championship tournament has been dropped for now. Anyway, in this match, the tecnicas won the first fall with a double pin at 8:11; the rudas won the second at 3:54 with simultaneous double scorpion death lock submission holds; and the third fall ended at 4:52 when all four were brawling outside the ring and Akira snuck back in the ring to beat the count, ending the match at 16:57. Akira did a nice Liger flip dive from off of the top rope, but nothing like the stuff she does in Japan. Not real great from these four. ** 1/4. By the way, did you know Akira is considered one of the, if not the, most common men's name in Japan? Akira is not her real first name. It is considered a real "butch" first name.

The segunda was a match-up of the world's finest super mini estrellas. The tecnico team of CMLL World Champion team captain la Mascarita Sagrada, Octagoncito, and el Misteriocito (making his TV debut, which is why the match went as it did) defeated the rudo team of el Piratita Morgan, el Pequeno Pierroth, and captain el Espectrito (junior). The tecnicos won the first fall when Misteriocito pinned Morgan with a regular rana in 5:26. The second went to los rudos in 6:57 when both Morgan and Espectrito pinned Sagrada with a series of a power slam, a senton, and a big splash. The third fall went 6:00, and the match 18:23, before Misteriocito got the glory of a pinfall over Pierrothito with a huracan rana while the other two rudos were counted out after big dives by the tecnicos. This finish made a lot of sense as Morgan and Espectrito, who were counted out but not "humiliated by being pinned clean in the center of the ring," started pushing, shoving, and punching Pierrothito, either fully splitting up or beginning to. The faces were spectacular here; Sagrada was the best and Octagoncito, who turned 18 on April 24, 1992, is probably the world's best under-18 wrestler. The rudos all put the faces over well, but Espectrito needs to lose some weight big time. *** 1/2

Speaking of losing weight, the very sad sight (and plight) of "Super Porky" el Brazo de Plata was up next. He and his brothers, el Brazo and team captain el Brazo de Oro defeated the team of el Volador and el Misterioso (who together are the current Mexican National Parejas Champions) and their partner and team captain, el Angel Azteca, in three falls that went 13:57. Briefly, Plata pinned Misterioso at 7:58 of the first fall with a big sit off of a blocked sunset flip attempt. The second fall went 2:48 before el Brazo de Oro was pinned by a huracan rana delivered by el Misterioso. And the decisive fall went 3:13 before el Brazo pinned el Angel Azteca with a power slam. The work was fine, but to me the big story was the sad shape of el Brazo de Plata. It has become big news in Mexico City, and has been covered in the lucha libre magazines and in the newspapers. Doctors have warned Porky to lose weight or risk aggravating an already weak ticker. As Dave Meltzer mentioned in last weeks' WRESTLING OBSERVER NEWSLETTER, Porky does not work out much, he just eats and eats and eats and watches wrestling video tapes. Porky looked very bad (health-wise) during the match, and looked like he was about to go into cardiac arrest after the second fall. This and he was in only for 30- to 45- second spots during each fall. He needs help fast. The match was fine, ***, but painful in this way to watch.

The semifinal between los Intocables del Ring (Jaque Mate, Masakre, and team captain Pierroth junior) versus Lizmark, Atlantis, and Salomon Grondy did not air. We went to the main event, which saw Black Magic (Norman Smiley) defeat la Fiera (Arturo Casco Poblano) two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 11:37. This was a singles match with no other stipulations. The first fall went 5:46 before Magic submitted to a Fiera arm bar (Fiera worked over the arm the whole match). The second went 3:55 before Magic got his own submission win with a single leg boston crab submission hold. The third fall went only 1:56 before they did a nice spot which ended with Magic cleanly pinning Fiera with the Northern Lights' Suplex Hold. This was the most American style, or non-lucha libre style, main event I can remember here, with a lot of matwork and submission selling. And, the face got a win, and a clean one, to offset the past and future rudo wins which keep happening more often than you would think here. ***

This brings me to my point in the original paragraph in this section. As I said, last year, this show would have been an unusually good show for this promotion. This year, both in terms of effort and importance, it was a fair show, but nothing special. That's good! If they can keep up the effort in the ring and keep promoting new and interesting issues for the fans, they will be in good shape for the foreseeable future. Their television product has improved a lot from 1991, also. Last week I went into a brief analysis of the UWA television show overall. Here is a brief synopsis of my thoughts on the Galavision/Televisa show: They have improved the announcing drastically by dropping the heel commentator Arturo "Art" Rivera and getting away from the inane heel/face taunting and giggling that marked 1991 shows; things are more straight here and Doctor Morales's peculiar poetry is allowed to shine. They have improved the editing drastically too; whereas last year they had cuts with no rhyme and reason, now they simply have commercials before each of the four matches and after the main event, so that each match can show unedited and allow its own momentum to build up. Televisa has clearly invested some money in lighting tricks, sprucing up the arenas (new mats and signs and the like) and has much crisper camera work, too. Their big problem is they desperately need to make the crowds better. At times (like the Panther vs. Love Machine mask match) where the crowd is going nuts visually, it's not backed up on the audio. Still, this production is highly improved, and if you take wrestling quality into play, is one of the top three Weekly TV shows of mens' promotions in the world (a claim that couldn't be made up until now, in my opinion). In a lot of ways, it is reminiscent of the old World Class TV shows from Reunion Arena.

LUCHADORES EN JAPON: The third "Top of The Super Junior" junior heavyweight tournament is going on in New Japan rings from April 16, 1992 to April 30th. Wrestlers from Mexico include Jose "el Negro" Casas and Eddy Guerrero. Japanese wrestlers who have wrestled in Mexico in the last year who are entered are Lyger (Keiichi Yamada) and el Samurai (Osamu Matsuda). Also, The Pegasus Kid (Christopher Michael Benoit) from Canada and The Flying Scorpio (Charles Skaggs) from Denver, Colorado (see page 4, he is coming to the UWA in May) are entered from UWA rings. The other competitors are David "Fit" Finlay from Ireland, Norio Honaga from Japan, and Koji Kanemoto, who worked as Tiger Mask III on March 1st in Yokohama. Here are the results of the first four days of competition (scoring is 1 point for a win and 0 points for *any* other outcome):

* 4/16/92: Samurai p. Lyger (huracan rana after a foul); Casas p. Guerrero (la magisterial or la Dandina); Honaga p. Kanemoto (german suplex hold); and Pegasus p. Scorpio (roll-up after blocking a boston crab attempt); Finlay, off.

* 4/18/92: Liger p. Kanemoto; Finlay p. Scorpio; Samurai p. Casas (that result would be unthinkable in Mexico!).

* 4/19/92: Finlay p. Kanemoto; Honaga p. Samurai; Liger p. Guerrero; the rest were off.

* 4/20/92: Honaga p. Scorpio; Samurai p. Kanemoto; Pegasus p. Guerrero.

The card of the 16th aired on TV 4/18; their 4/25 TV had a card taped 4/21 and Liger vs. Honaga and Pegasus vs. Casas were to air. Casas and Samurai are being put over strong as rudos, and will have a rudo vs. tecnico match versus Pegasus and Lyger on May 1, the day after the tournament. Sad to see Eddy not get more wins, as he may be the most under-rated or under-utilized Mexican luchador in the world.

No luchadores are in All Japan, but in the SWS promotion, CHavo Guerrero, el Satanico, and Saigon Dragon, el Ultimo Dragon finished a week-long tour last week. I reported about Dragon and Satanico from 4/18 last week, but on the same show, Sano pinned CHavo to retain his SWS *Junior* Heavyweight crown (Pegasus Kid holds the WWF *Light* Heavyweight crown). SWS was going to promote their junior champion as SWS/WWF champ, but they have stopped using the WWF half of that title. On the card of the 17th, Sano also pinned Guerrero in another title defense, and Dragon teamed with Hirakuazu Hirai to defeat el Satanico and Tetsuya Yamanaka (Dragon pinned Satanico with the german suplex hold to win the bout). On the opening show of the 16th, Dragon and Sano defeated Guerrero and Satanico in one fall when Dragon pinned Satanico with the german suplex hold.

The Universal federation had a very successful spot show April 19, 1992, at The Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Tokyo, Japan. They sold out, this was with four other shows happening in Tokyo within a 36-hour period preceding this show, and it was with very few local stars. The main event saw Akiyoshi and Takayama (who are in Japan called Bulldog Punish K. T. and Cooley Crush S. Z.) retain their UWF Intercontinental/UWA Intercontinental Parejas Championships by defeating the team of Transformer (who used to be billed as Kendo) and Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada in three falls. Transformer did not get over very well as that gimmick, so he's going back to Kendo (they love cheering for Kendo in Japan) on the next tour. The semifinal saw Shu, el Guerrero team with Erick "el Canelo" Casas to defeat Robin Hood (who now works Mexico as Atomo) and Oro (of the Metals team) in three falls. Robin Hood's brother el Brazo de Oro is the new booker here and Robin Hood, who gets no push in Mexico, is getting a super push here; he ran out in other matches. Also, The Lightning Kid and The Dynamic Lynn from Minneapolis defeated Masa Michinoku and Sakikage Gantetsu in a match with dives from the balcony. And in the opener (yes, just a four-match card) Mariko Yoshida (Mari CHan from Mexico) defeated Kaoru Maeda in two falls. Maeda is said to be headed to Mexico soon. They also announced another spot show for May 24, 1992, at Korakuen, where they

will bring in Cielon Ramirez and America (ex-el Pantera II, which fact seems to be an ultra state secret in Mexico and Japan), and a whole tour in June, where among the foreigners who will be brought in are Canelo Casas, Felino, Shu, Robin Hood, and two debuters, el Misterioso and el Volador.

UWA NEWS: Here is a summary of all the results that I have for this group for the month of April. Like I say, it's not much, but by next week things will have improved a lot as I'll have more news from here:

* 4/3/92, Arena Netzahualcoyotl: Pegasus Kid d. Villano IV 2-1 (WWF World Light Heavyweight title); Villano V d. Signo 2-1 (UWA World Light Heavyweight title); Dos Caras/Enrique Vera/Gran Hamada d. Killer/Head Hunters 2-1; Doctor Wagner jr./Navarro/Black Power d. Solar I/Coloso/Silver King 2-1.

* 4/5/92, el Toreo: Hijo del Santo d. la Sombra Negra (UWA World Welterweight title) 2-1; Fishman/Head Hunters d. Pegasus Kid/Hamada/Villano III 2-1; Silver King/Texano/Villano IV d. Signo/Negro Navarro/Black Power 2-1.

* 4/7/92, Celaya, Guanajuato: Los Guerreros del Acero I y II (The Steel Warriors) managed by el Sacerdote Maldito lost via disqualification in the third fall (for Sacerdote's interference) to Tineiblas I and junior (with Alushe).

* 4/12/92, el Toreo: Pegasus Kid d. Fishman (WWF Light Heavyweight Title) 2-1; Canek/Villano III/Villano V d. Bigelow/Head Hunters 2-1; King/Texano/Sicodelico drew Casas/Rambo/Wagner 1-1; Fantasma/Coloso/Villano IV d. Espanto jr./Scorpio I/Tigre Canadiense 2-1; Kendo Star/Dragones Chinos I y II d. Momotaro/Lobo Rubio/Shu, el Guerrero 2-1.

* 4/19/92, el Toreo: Bam Bam Bigelow/Andree el Gigante/Rambo d. Canek/Villano III/Villano V 2-0; Silver King/Texano/Tigre Canadiense d. Fishman/Head Hunters 2-1; Signo/Black Power/Negro Navarro d. Fantasma/Villano I/Villano IV 2-1; Super Raton/Super Pinochio/Sicodelico drew Casandro/Scorpio I/Scorpio jr. 1-1; Katana/Celestial d. Gran Petroneo/Ricky Boy 2-1.

* 4/21/92, Texcoco, Mexico: Los Guerreros del Acero (masks) d. Cesar Valentino (same one from LA 1970's)/Gestas (hair) 2-1 (mascaras contra caballerias).

* 4/26/92, el Toreo: Canek/Villano III/Villano V d. Andree el Gigante/Bam Bam Bigelow/Rambo 2-1; Silver King/Texano/Tigre Canadiense d. Doctor Wagner junior/Head Hunters 2-1; Gran Hamada/Hijo de Tineiblas/Tinieblas d. Fishman/D. N. S. Funas/Phil Lapon 2-1; Negro Navarro/Signo/Black Power d. Villano I/Villano IV/Colso 2-1; Katana/Lasser/Ninja Sasuke d. Angel Mortal/Lobo Rubio/Hijo del Diablo 2-1.

Some of you saw the television show Saturday on satellite from Imevision. It aired 4/25 and was taped 4/17/92. Next week's show, the one that airs Saturday May 2 on satellite will have been taped April 25, 1992. The main event was (will be?) Canek, Dos Caras, and el Villano III versus Doctor Wagner junior, Bam Bam Bigelow, and Andree el Gigante. The semifinal has (supposedly) a tag-team title match as UWA World Parejas Champions los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) face los Cazadores del Cabezas I y II (The Head Hunters A and B). The tercera sees Solar I team with Tineiblas senior and junior to face Fishman, Rambo, and el Signo. The segunda has Mister Condor and el Mohicano II versus el Gran Apache I and Lasser. And the inicial sees Sable versus el Rayo Tapatio I. Many of you have called to say that all the Mexico City shows are up on satellite earlier, with the CMLL Saturday night show airing earlier by two hours and the CMLL Sunday afternoon show airing one hour earlier than it used to. I will have more definite information next week, with satellite channels, etc.

Since I did not get into it earlier, here is the television show for CMLL that went up on the satellite last Sunday (4/26) and will air on Galavision (5/2): The main event has los Intocables del Ring (Pierroth junior, Jaque Mate, and Masakre) versus Black Magic, Atlantis, and Casanova el Vampiro Canadiense (non-title match; Intocables are CMLL World Trios Champions). The semifinal is a return match from the previous Friday, as los Mosqueteros del Diablo, los Brazos (el Brazo de Plata, el Brazo, and el Brazo de Oro) face el Misterioso, el Angel Azteca, and el Volador. The tercera finds Iga (Masao Orihara), Koga (Toshiyuki Nakahara), and Super Astro versus Vandal Drummond's favorites los Nuevos Destruyentes del Ring (Tony Arce, his brother Rocco Valente, and el Vulcano). I know these three matches aired. One of the two openers also did (will?): The inicial had el Guerrero de la Muerte and el Guerrero Negro versus (Super) Kiss and la Antifaz. And the segunda had los Metalicos Olimpicos (Oro, Plata, and Bronce) versus la Plaga del Ring (Enjambre, Marabunta, and Ponzona). It is possible that the TV for the week after this will be taped at la Pista Arena Revolucion, in honor of children's day (4/30), in front of school kids, as that idea worked really well last year.

Back to the UWA, this past Sunday, 4/26, was the last day in on this tour for Andree el Gigante, Bam Bam Bigelow, and los Cazadores del Cabezas. For the next few weeks they have very few foreigners booked. In right now, and for up to a month, are "The Canadian Express" which are D. N. S. Funas (Douglas Furnas) and Phil Lapon (Daniel Kroffatt a.k.a. Phil LaFleur). On May 10, 1992, Charles Skaggs, who is "The Flying Scorpio" in New Japan rings, will be in for his first tour of UWA rings. He will be under a hood, billed as "The Black Scorpio." Also, it appears set that los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) and los Cazadores del Cabezas will be in the NWA Tag tourney 6/16 in S.C.

CMLL NEWS: Here is a summary (a brief one) of the CMLL results from April 1992 that I have recorded:

- * 4/3/92, Arena Mexico: Blue Panther d. Love Machine 2-0 (mascara v. caballera); Atlantis d. la Fiera 2-1 (NWA Middleweight Title); Konnan/Perro Aguayo/Rayo de Jalisco jr. d. Cien Caras/Mascara 2000/Universo 2000 2-1; Masakre/Pierroth jr./Jaquie Mate d. Octagon/Atlantis/Mascara Sagrada 2-1.
- * 4/4/92, Pista Arena Revolucion: Akira/Mita/Maria del Angel d. Lola Gonzales/la Olimpica/la Super Estrella 2-1.
- * 4/5/92, Arena Mexico: Apolo Dantes d. Javier Cruz (caballera contra caballera) 2-1; Satanico d. Lizmark (NWA World Light Heavyweight Title) 2-1.
- * 4/10/92, Arena Mexico: Satanico/Fiera/Espectro de Ultratumba d. Love Machine/Ultimo Dragon/Black Magic 2-1; Mano Negra/Atlantis/Mascara Sagrada d. Fuerza Guerrera/Emilio Charles jr./Jerry Estrada 2-1; Rocco Valente/Vulcano/Tony Arce d. Iga/Koga/Filoso 2-1; Akira/Mita d. Lola Gonzales/Xochitl Hamada 2-1; Guerrero Maya/Guerrero del Futuro/Damian el Guerrero d. Oro/Plata/Bronce 2-1.
- * 4/12/92, Arena Naucalpan: Oro/Plata/Bronce d. Felino/Arkangel de la Muerte/Guerrero de la Muerte (Estado de Mexico Trios Campeonatos) 2-1.
- * 4/12/92, Arena Coliseo: Brazo de Oro/Brazo de Plata/Brazo d. Faraon/Lizmark/Hijo de Lizmark 2-1; Espectro jr./Espectro de Ultratumba/Cadaver de Ultratumba d. Mogur/Comando Ruso/Blue Demon jr. 2-1; Iga/Koga/Rokambole d. Canelo Casas/Supremo I/Supremo II 2-1; Neftali/Venus/Diabolica d. Selene/Josseline/Mitsuki Wong 2-1.
- * 4/17/92, Arena Mexico: Black Magic d. Fiera 2-1; Brazo de Oro/Brazo de Plata/Brazo d. Misterioso/Volador/Angel Azteca 2-1; Mascarita Sagrada/Octagoncito/Misteriocito d. Pequeno Pierroth/Piratita Morgan/Espectrito 2-1; Akira/Mita d. Lola Gonzales/Xochitl Hamada 2-1.
- * 4/19/92, Arena Naucalpan: Kundra d. Arkangel de la Muerte 2-1 (Estado de Mexico Peso Welter Campeonato).
- * 4/19/92, Arena Coliseo: Atlantis/Anibal/Love Machine d. Blue Panther/Estrada/Guerrera 2-1.
- * 4/26/91, Arena Coliseo: Blue Panther/Javier Cruz/Felino d. Salomon Grondy/Mano Negra/Apolo Dantes 2-1; Huracan Sevilla/Solar II/Aguila de Plata d. Gargola el Sultan/Hussein el Gran Sheick/Comando Ruso 2-1; Cynthia Moreno/Lola Gonzales/Selene d. Diabolica/Venus/Neftali 2-1; Mario Prado junior/Climax d. Guerrero Samurai II/Pegaso 2-1.

Well, as you can see, things are pretty light on the results side. I have some ideas of some big cards, but I do not know the results of many of them. I do not yet know who won the CMLL Light Heavyweight match between Pierroth junior and la Mascara Sagrada; the CMLL Welterweight title match between America and Erick "el Canelo" Casas; or the CMLL World Heavyweight title match between Cien Caras and el Rayo de Jalisco junior. After speaking to some very nice people in the southern California area in the past week, I have news of the results of those and other matches on the way to me, and I will have them all (or at least I should have all those results) plus other results for next week's issue, which will be a real catch-up issue as far as what is going on inside the ring for the CMLL.

Some of you have asked me why I refer to the EMLL as the CMLL; it's more a matter of reflecting what is happening down in Mexico City. I do not think this is any big deal. I believe, and have strong reason to believe, that Televisa, through the entreaties of CMLL president Antonio Pena, is either funding or helping to fund some of this organization's activities. Since the organization is making money, that is a sound financial move for Televisa, as the money they invest turns a profit. The CMLL is "absorbing" the old EMLL slowly as the focus of the organization in the ring. The official magazine for this group, ARENA, which is designed as a copy of the WWF Magazine, refers more to the CMLL now than the EMLL. I do know that the wrestlers still refer to "working for the empresa" just as in the US guys will say "working for New York" or "working for Atlanta." But my change in terminology is reflective of the change in Mexico City, which is in turn reflective of the subtle power shifts among the CMLL (Pena) and the EMLL (Paco Alonso and Juan Herrera). From what I can piece together, Alonso, the long time head of this group, seems to be afraid (and he has reason to be, believe me) that Pena will try to take over the group. I think these two men co-exist in an uneasy state, but for the moment, they are co-existing, and not at war. In the end, by the end of about next year, neither the "NWA" name nor the "EMLL" name will likely remain, as their will simply be "CMLL" and "CMLL" champions and that will be the new focus of the newer, more television oriented promotion.

In other out of the ring news, Octagon suffered a very minor injury in a card held Tuesday, April 21, at la Arena Coliseo. He broke a small bone in his right hand. To be safe, as Octagon is a big star, he is being kept out of card until the group begins its big spring run at la Arena Mexico, which I believe starts May 22. Also, this group cancelled a card that would have been held Sunday, April 26, in Guadalajara, at la Arena Coliseo de Guadalajara; the reason was concern for the explosion victims in that country. The promotion properly felt it would have been bad taste to go ahead with a big lucha libre card in that section of town (the arena was not damaged, but was in the worst-hit area) so soon after the tragedy. Los Brazos were to face Atlantis, Black Magic, and Vampiro Canadiense in the headliner.

CALIFORNIA CARD REVIEW: Here are the results of the card held Sunday, April 12, 1992, at The All Nations Center, 213 North Soto Street, in Los Angeles (right on the LA/East LA border):

The opening match saw Ponky Boy defeat Zandor two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 12:19. Zandor won the first fall in 3:12 with the Mexican Stretch submission hold. Ponky Boy took the second in 1:38 after a double-arm suplex. The third went 7:29 before Ponky executed a VERY slow small package (or was it an inside cradle? I never could tell the difference). This was a fine opener and both guys got to show off their stuff a lot.

The segunda found Vandal Drummond and Thunder Mountain defeating Greg "I'm Too Sexy" Regalado and The Gemini Kid two falls to one in a total elapsed time of 17:55. The first fall went a mere 1:58 before Drummond made Gemini submit to a leg stretcher while Thunder pinned Regalado with a power slam. The second went 2:49 before Regalado pinned Vandal with an off-of-the-second-rope DDT and Gemini pinned Thunder with an off-of-the-second-rope-backward drop. The third fall went a long 13:08 (a harbinger of things to come) before Drummond pinned Gemini after a DDT (Drummond managed to unmask Gemini during the cover but the ref missed it) while Thunder pinned Regalado with a regular martinete (piledriver). Everybody looked good here; Drummond has had in the past shown that he often has more tecnico moves than the tecnicos, but he was a strong heel here and made the match. Thunder Mountain was impressive and the two tecnicos were fine considering they did not have much offense during the match.

The third match found Zandor (again) teaming with el Delfin (not the one from Mexico or Japan) to defeat Ponky Boy (again) and Sammy Delgado in a total elapsed time of 18:04. The first fall went 8:27 before el Delfin pinned Ponky Boy with a suplex while Sammy Delgado was "counted out of the ring," having legitimately blown out his knee big-time at the 7:08 mark. Ponky, the rudo mind you, started the second fall alone, but soon got help in the form of a new pareja, Vandal Drummond (working again), who appeared to help two minutes into the second fall. That fall ended in 5:59 when Drummond pinned Zandor with an inside cradle (or was it a small package?). The third fall lasted 3:38 before Zandor pinned Drummond clean with a regular suplex. All in all, Drummond was out of the locker room for forty minutes out of fifty-five, and did not appear winded or blown up at all. The wrestlers worked well during the minutes surrounding Delgado's unfortunate injury, and all the work was kept clean and straight. It was nice to see that the guys on the lower part of the card did not overdo the dives and brawling outside of the ring, which often leaves the main eventers very little new to do.

The semifinal is already famous in some circles as the longest six-man tag match in many years in lucha libre circles—almost forty minutes! The result saw tecnicos Piloto Suicida and Cobra Man lose to rudos el Salvaje and el Terror CHicano two falls to one in total elapsed time of 33:47. The first fall went 17:25 before Piloto pinned both opponents with diving topes to win the fall. The second went to los rudos via double count out of the ring in 4:59. The third lasted 11:23 before both rudos made Cobra Man submit to a double-leg boston crab submission hold. Then, Piloto Suicida's mortal enemy Crazy Boy came out and attacked Piloto, who had received numerous fouls late in the third fall, to set up a big match down the road. Even though the time of the match was 33:47, with rest periods and post-match, the guys were out there nearly 45. Too long, though they had a ton of heat for it. Piloto's performance was unbelievable.

The main event featured the team of Crazy Boy and Super Boy victorious over el Piloto Nuclear and Capitan Oro two falls to one in a total elapsed time of about 15:26. The first fall went about 4:00 (the ref never signalled for the bell as the teams began brawling outside the ring before the match) and Super Boy got both pins with a backward off-of-the-top-rope diving splash. The second went 4:46 before Capitan Oro pinned Super Boy with a power bomb. The third ended at 6:50 when Piloto Suicida from the semifinal entered the ring to exact revenge on Crazy Boy, thus causing Oro/Nuclear to be disqualified. General mayhem with several wrestlers brawling in the ring continued for several minutes thereafter. A wild scene. Crazy Boy and Super Boy were the best things in this match; both are very good local guys.

FURTHER CALIFORNIA LUCHA NOTES: I also want to add that on Sunday, April 26, 1992, the same basic crew ran another show at The All Nations Center. In the segunda, Greg Regalado and The Gemini Kid defeated Thunder Mountain and Vandal Drummond in two straight falls. After the match, The Gemini Kid challenged Drummond to a mascara contra caballera match. After intense crowd pressure, rudo Drummond accepted the challenge, and the mask/hair match will take place on Sunday, May 3, at The All Nations Center. It is yet to be announced but that may be the main event on the card or there may even also be another stipulation match, a mascara contra mascara match...The same crew is also slated to work the following weekend, this time for a noble cause. The All Nations Center is sponsoring a lucha libre benefit card with proceeds going to Guadalaajaran relief efforts. That card will be on Saturday (May 9) that weekend and not Sunday, and probably Saturday evening as opposed to afternoon. I should have more details next week. I believe the promoter or some of the wrestlers (or maybe both) is from Guadalajara originally...These guys had a write-up in a local East Los Angeles free weekly paper. One of the funny things is that, in profiling the Drummond/Thunder vs. Gemini/Regalado match, the paper called

Regalado (who is Hispanic) and Gemini (who is black) "Paisanos" or something to that effect, and urged them to kick ass against the invaders, Drummond and Thunder (who are both white)! Apparently, there was a lot of teasing back and forth in the locker room about this....And finally along these lines, this same crew drove over 16 hours each way this past weekend to work a card for promoter Carlos Mata in Denver, Colorado. It seems the trip was a big success as they sold far more tickets than had been expected. Mata wants to book the same crew again in Denver for four shows, either on the weekend of May 8th or on the following weekend. I should have more news about several of these matters in the next issue.

LATE NEWS: Here are the results from the UWA card held Sunday, April 26, 1992, at the "el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos" bull ring in Naucalpan, Mexico, Mexico (suburban Mexico City): In the main event, in what might have been his final match in, Andree el Gigante teamed with Bam Bam Bigelow and Rambo in a losing effort versus Canek, el Villano III, and el Villano V, in two straight falls. The first fall ended when Bam Bam Bigelow, in serious danger of being pinned by Canek, fouled the Mexican, causing the referees (el Fresero and el Bucles) to call for the automatic disqualification. The second fall also went the way of the Mexican babyfaces when Andree went to clothesline Canek, Canek ducked, and Andree nailed Bigelow, whom Canek then pinned. Since Rambo was the team captain, he continued until he was pinned by los Villanos with a double team huracan rana to end the fall and the match. Bigelow was upset, to say the least, at Andree. Bam Bam got a chair, brought it into the ring, and started attacking Andree mercilessly with the chair. Andree had turned babyface! My speculation from here is that, despite their advertisements to the contrary, the UWA may bring Andree back for another tour; put Bigelow over Andree to create a new number one "foreign menace;" and then Canek can feud around the horn with Bigelow, eventually running the American out of Mexico. The semifinal, for the second straight week, clearly advertised a UWA World Parejas Titles Defense by champions los Cowboys (Silver King and el Texano) versus los Cazadores del Cabezas I y II (The Head Hunters A and B from W*ING in Japan and WWC in Puerto Rico). And for the second straight week, the advertising was false. The match ended up as a regular trio match. Los Cowboys were joined by Mike Lozanksy, el Tigre Canadiense, and they defeated the team of The Head Hunters and Doctor Wagner junior (Wagner actually was supposed to be in the main event in Rambo's place, too) in three falls. This was said to be the best match of the afternoon. The tercera found Haraoki "el Gran" Hamada teaming with the team called "los Amos de la Noche:" Tinieblas "el Capitan Aventura" I, el Hijo de Tinieblas, and their little Ewok-like mascot Alushe. They defeated the team of Fishman and The Canadian Express, who are in fact Daniel Kroffatt and Douglas Furnas and are called The Can-Am Express in All Japan rings. This went three falls also and was highlighted by tiny Alushe (75 cm or 2'5.5" tall) doing a flying/diving body press (Superfly Splash if you will) from off of the second rope onto Fishman between falls. The segunda of the afternoon found UWA World Trios Champions los Nuevos Misioneros de la Muerte (The Black Power II, el Signo, and Miguel "el Negro" Navarro) defeat el Villano I, el Villano IV, and el Colosso two falls to one in a non-title match. The opener saw el Ninja Sasuke ("Masa Michinoku" from Universal in Japan) team with Katana (Leon CHino) and UWA World Lightweight Champion Lasser to defeat el Hijo del Diablo, his father el Lobo Rubio, and el Angel Mortal (who is tiny, under 5'0" tall) two falls to one.

The CMLL held a card Sunday, April 26, 1992, also, this one at la Arena Coliseo in downtown Mexico City. The main event featured a no-show by The Love Machine (Art Barr) and the paper said fans were pretty pissed, as that took away most of the reason for the main event. The results found The Blue Panther, Javier "el Monarca" Cruz, and el Felino (ex-Baby Casas) defeat la Mano Negra (Machine's substitute), Apolo Dantes, and Salomon Grondy. Dantes and Cruz carried the match, according to the paper. The first fall went to the tecnicos after Grondy pinned Felino with a diving splash from off of the second rope. The second and third fall both went to Cruz via pinfall over Dantes; this gains some "revenge" for Cruz, who has lost two hair matches to Dantes in the last seven months. The semifinal saw Juan "el Huracan" Sevilla team with el Solar II and la Aguila de Plata to defeat Hussein el Gran Sheick (Jose Luis Arias Romero), Gargola el Sultan, and el Comando Ruso two falls to one. The tercera found Cynthia Moreno teaming with Selene and Lola "Dinamita" Gonzales to defeat Neftali, la Venus, and la Diabolica two falls to one. This was Cynthia's return match after a vacation, and instead of looking rusty, she was said to have looked very good. The segunda saw el Guerreo Samurai II and Pegaso falling in three falls to Climax (who is also absolutely tiny) and Mario Prado junior. I have no word on the opener. Maybe Vandal Drummond over Hulk Hogan en dos al hilo?

The UWA will had a card Monday, April 27, 1992, at la Arena Puebla, in Puebla, Puebla, Mexico, about 50 miles outside of Mexico City. The main event was scheduled to be Canek, Enrique Vera, and el Villano III versus el Signo and The Canadian Express. Underneath, el Gran Hamada, el Tigre Canadiense, and el Villano V faced Fishman, el Negro Navarro, and Black Power; Transforemer, Silver King, and Texano faced Doctor Wagner junior, Rambo, and el Engendro (who has the best facials and reactions of anyone in this federation); and in the opener, Katana, el Celestial, and el Ninja Sasuke versus Soberbio, el Gran Petreoneo, and el Mohicano II. Looks like el Mohicano I is still out with his injury. And, finally, on Tuesday, April 28, 1992, at la Arena Queretaro in Queretaro, Queretaro, Mexico (about 75 miles outside Mexico City) the main event was a UWA World Light Heavyweight Championship Defense with champion el Villano V making his initial defense of the belt he won from el Signo on April 3, 1992, at la Arena Netzahualcoyotl, against challenger el Scorpio junior. I would definitely NOT look for a title change in this contest.

MINI-BIOGRAPHY: NEGRO CASAS: "El Negro Casas," Jose Casas Ruiz, was born January 10, 1961, in Mexico City, Distrito Federal, Mexico, the son of famous wrestler (and now CMLL referee) Jose "Pepe" Casas. Towards the end of his son's adolescence, and after his own retirement, Pepe Casas took a job for Francisco "Paco" Alonso Lutterroth to head up the training of wrestlers at the official EMLL gym on the fifth floor of la Arena Mexico. There, Negro Casas, as he was to be called, and his two younger brothers learned the art of lucha libre from their father and from other wrestlers who were EMLL stars in the 1970's. Negro Casas turned out to be very good, albeit extremely small, and decided to make lucha libre his career. In December 1979, he debuted at tiny gyms in the Mexico City outskirts. Now, as far as the "official" biography goes, Negro Casas is said to have debuted in March 1980 at la Arena Azteca in Mexico City, but in an interview last year with *Box y Lucha* magazine, Negro said that he did in fact debut about three weeks before his 20th birthday. In fact, that article was published in commemoration of Negro's 30th birthday and simultaneous 10th anniversary of wrestling. Negro went on to be a big star; by his fifth year in the business, there were those who already thought he was at the top rung of technical ability of all Mexican luchadores. The smaller titles came to Negro quickly. He won the welterweight championship of Toluca (the capital of the state of Mexico) and the welterweight and lightweight titles of Xochimilco in his first two years, capping it off by winning the State Of Mexico Lightweight Title (a precursor to the National Lightweight Title) in 1983. Then, after a jump to the UWA, which at that time was the larger and more successful of the two promotions, Negro won his first World Title, as on January 1, 1984, at el Toreo de Cuatro Caminos in suburban Naucalpan, Casas beat Black Terry to become the 5th-ever UWA World Lightweight Champion. Negro defended the belt 12 times successfully, but number 13 proved unlucky, as he lost the belt to his lifetime nemesis, el Hijo del Santo, in December 1984 at el Toreo. Casas later started up a feud with Yoshihiro Asai when the latter made his UWA debut in December 1987, and they proved to have the best matches in Mexico for many years. In 1988, Casas went to the WWA, and won the WWA World Welterweight Championship in Tijuana in 1988. He held the title for a year before dropping it, also in Tijuana, in 1989, to Tornado Negro. Casas returned to the UWA where he has stayed since. On January 28, 1991, at la Arena Aficion in Pachuca, Hidalgo, Mexico, Casas beat Super Astro to win the UWA World Middleweight Title, a belt he still holds today. Casas has become a big hit in Japan. He made several tours for the Universal group before an out-of-ring dispute with the booker led to his being dropped. Now Casas works for New Japan, mostly against Lyger, and is making his sixth tour of Japan in April 1992, at the junior heavyweight tournament. Casas has become one of the, if not THE, top heels in the world, with workrate, wrestling sense, and heel antics on a par with the best. It has been often speculated that he would jump to the CMLL, which now employs his father, two younger brothers (Canelo Casas and el Felino), his long-time girlfriend (Xochitl Hamada) and his favorite long-time partners and foes (The Blue Panther and el Ultimo Dragon). I would bet that by the end of 1992, the jump will occur, and it may be as soon as May. Oh, and for your trivia buffs, Jose Casas calls himself "el Negro" Casas as his "nombre de guerra" (Name of Battle) in tribute to his favorite wrestler growing up, Miguel "el Negro" Navarro; how odd that it is quite possible that when Negro Casas jumps to the CMLL, Negro Navarro might well jump right with him...

From: Lucha Libre Weekly

Volume 1, Issue 10

Tuesday, April 28, 1992

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